1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia

Notes to the Reader

128 PRONUNCIATION OF INDIVIDUAL WORDS, ELISION, and emphasis play almost equal roles in the Negro speech of this section. Except for the spelling of surnames, dialect in the interviews has been faithfully transcribed. Great care has been taken to try to represent the pronunciation, but to have represented literally the elision and emphasis would have made the text unintelligible to the average non-scientific reader. Therefore the elision has been moderated and the emphasis left to the reader. Diacritical marks have not been used because it was thought it would give the text too foreign an appearance, and apostrophes commonly used in dialect have been discarded for simplification. Many variations in pronunciation occur even in a small area; younger members of a community speak differently from older, the better educated differently from the less well educated. Excitement or emotion often throws the speaker back into a type of speech which ordinarily he no longer uses. Almost universally *uh* is substituted for *er* and *d* for *th*, though there are more exceptions to the latter than to the former. An *h* is nearly always substituted for an *r* following a vowel and *ah* is substituted for the terminal *re;* thus *here* becomes *heah*. This latter spelling is as near as can be achieved, and though the diphthong is present the *e* is very short. In certain cases persons have learned to pronounce certain words correctly while other words of the same type will still be spoken in dialect. *Mother* is a common example of this. The *th* in this word has often been deliberately learned

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128 194 195 though the final *er* will still be pronounced *uh*. Initial syllables are often pronounced differently from the same syllable occurring in the middle of a sentence. The pronoun *I* at the beginning of a sentence is almost always pronounced correctly, whereas *I* in the middle of the sentence is usually pronounced *uh*. Thus the same word often varies according to its importance and the need of the speaker for emphasis, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Some of the above-mentioned points may not seem worthy of mention to the student familiar with white speech of the same section. But because the white speech has many similarities of pronunciation, it does not make the recorded speech of these studies any less of a dialect nor any less of a variation from standard speech.

128 African parallels will be found in the appendix. These have been grouped according to subjects and the subjects arranged alphabetically and numbered consecutively. Text reference numbers (Arabic) refer to the appendix numbers where pertinent parallels may be found. Where an appendix number is followed by a letter, the parallel under this heading is especially noteworthy. Though European parallels could be cited for many of the cultural patterns, the citations in the appendix have been limited to African material both because the European material is better known and because the African parallels suggest interesting lines of investigation.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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123 People in general are often insecure about their particular varieties of speech, and collecting spontaneous speech data can be a problem for anyone conducting a linguistic survey. It is even more of a problem on the Sea Islands because the native speakers of Gullah can and do adjust [195] their speech to produce the closest possible approximations of standard English when they are addressing strangers. To eliminate pressure on the speakers to avoid the creole speech (and to help validate my presence), I explained that one of my objectives for being on the islands was to learn as much as possible about folk medicine "roots," folktales, "lies," and "the old-time talk." I explained, for example, that my grandmother had taught me to identify and collect herbs or roots which were helpful in alleviating certain ailments or even in effecting certain cures. These topics generated much interest and humor; consequently, I was able to assemble a wide store of knowledge concerning medicinal cures, complete with folktales, as well as to collect several varieties of speech data.

123 Something I learned by sitting through one market day in Charleston 437 illustrates a final point. As I observed an islander selling tomatoes, I realized that she felt much more satisfaction when she sold her goods to a person with whom she had haggled assiduously over the price than when she sold the same amount for a higher price to a well-intentioned but clearly patronizing customer. She had been robbed of the satisfaction of arriving at an "agreed" price. Feelings about the inequality of human beings had been transmitted along with the unequal prices of the tomatoes.

123 Achieving and maintaining equality in relationships is crucial when 124 striving to establish rapport with informants. Kenneth Goldstein cites a statement to this effect made by Alan Lomax in 1950 during a symposium on data collecting at the Mid-century International Folklore Conference held at Indiana University:

> People say to me that they would like to help me along with my work, that I look as if I need help. And I tell them that I am taking up their time and that I would like to make it up to them. There was never any question of dignity being involved; none of us in our situation was more dignified than anyone else. If the informant liked to drink, I drank, and if he liked to acquire a salary, I haggled with him very hard and very seriously, but we fought over it as equals.[6]

[p. xxiv is blank]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) . 1987
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782 IV. Appeals

A. Father, we down here this evening
Heavenly Father
Asking for your mercy

B. We want you to come in this building
One more time

C. We ask you to please strengthen us
Where we are weak
And build us where we are tearing down

D. We ask you to look at the leaders
From one to another, Jesus
Make them ushers of sound judgment
Then truly devoted to God

E. I want you to bless each and every usher
Jesus
Help them to please hold out and hold on

F. Look at Reverend Pinckney one more time

G. Look at the mistress of ceremonies
Jesus

H. Want you to look at Jerusalem one more time

I. [Look at] me too

V. Peroration

Somewhere, Lord, Job declare
The wicked must cease in trouble
And my soul have rest
'Tis thy servant's prayer, Master!

782 • 195 [193] [537] The social setting in which a prayer of this sort is delivered contributes to the development of bilingual skills for many Gullah speakers. This prayer, like most others, contains few features characteristic of contemporary Gullah speech, such as the use of the preverbal markers *de, ben, bina,* and *don* and the omission of inflectional markers. There is a good reason for the absence of these and other features in this text. A prayer of this type is composed in a tradition of rhetorical

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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782 eloquence and skill. Thus the speech is expected to be elevated and
• 195 elaborate while retaining certain syntactic and phonological features
[539] characteristic of the community language. Many prayers are composed
[533] of hymns, Scriptures, spirituals, and traditional expressions, reflecting both biblical concepts and the black experience. Accordingly, the vocabulary, syntax, and phrasing do not necessarily represent those of the person praying, but may be words and phrasing he has heard and
782 stored in his memory over the years. Again, the learned prayer givers
539 are most often those "gifted" in the art, with little formal training. The important factors are that the person have a good memory, be able to join beautifully constructed phrases together spontaneously, and be able to establish a chanting rhythm which can be easily sustained by the reply from the audience. While the text alone is intelligible on paper, most of the beauty of the prayer escapes, along with the force of the audience's reply and the increasing fervor of the speaker's call.

539 Opening Prayer for the Usher's Anniversary
[782]

Mr. James Brown
New Jerusalem AME Church
Wadmalaw Island, South Carolina
13 July 1980

Our Father, who art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come, O Lord
Let thy holy and righteous
will be done on this earth
As you will was already done in heaven
Give us, Lord, this day
As our daily bread
You forgive those who have sin
And trespass against us *Amen*
Lead us not into sin, neither temptation
But, please deliver us from evil *Yes!*

O Lord, that thine may be our kingdom
We expecting your kingdom to be
[A] poor sinner['s] glory *Oh yeah!*

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders .NN23
South Carolina
Igbo FF26

S 551

are among those names whose roots are traceable to West African languages. Some older island residents are named after the day of the week or month of the year when they were born. While it is very European to ask, with Shakespeare, "What's in a name?" it is very African to answer, "Everything is in a name." For example, the name Ada given to a girl child in Igbo means that the girl is the firstborn daughter. It is customary for Igbo children to be named after days of the week or given names that express sentiment: a woman who has long been unable to conceive might name a child finally born to her Ngozi, for instance, meaning "blessing" in Igbo. Some linguists have challenged Turner's work, claiming that most of the four thousand Africanisms that he listed were nicknames, or what the islanders call "basket" names.[11] Yet as DeCamp so aptly states, "Names are also a part of language and are no less capable of preserving an African heritage than are common nouns."[12]

I 551

S 114 551

Many of the "old words"—Africanisms—known to the older island residents are, with the "new talk," fading from use. A number of idioms are still very much apparent in daily communication, however. Consider the following list:

S 195

dark the light: the sun was set
out the light: turn the light out
hot the water: bring the water to a boil
ugly too much: very ugly
the old man bury: the old man is dead
this side: this island
do the fect to you: cause harm to come to you
can't bring the word right now: I can't remember at the moment, or I will not speak of it at this time
pull off my hat: I had to run
de fix for you: lie in wait for you
watchitsir!: watch your step!
day clean: daybreak
clean skin: a person with light skin color
one day mong all!: finally!
nothing for dead: nothing dying
the sun de red for down: sunset
knock em: hit
sweetmouth: flatter

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
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rest you mouth!: shut up!
long eye: envy

Most linguists agree that lexicon is perhaps one of the most arbitrary features that languages borrow from one another, and it is in this area that they tend to borrow most extensively. As Talmy Givón has explained, when different linguistic groups come in contact, it is natural that the area of most acute linguistic conflict will be the lexicon; by borrowing words from each other, speakers resolve the communication conflict. But languages seldom borrow grammar.[13] Thus, in areas where Gullah is spoken, it is well to understand that while the lexicon is primarily English, much of the underlying grammar is rooted in West African languages.

In detailed analysis of Gullah I have used Walt Wolfram's "matrix of cruciality," selecting for discussion those features still persistent in Gullah speech.[14] Every effort has been made to present very technical material as nontechnically as possible, in order to assist readers in understanding peculiarities of Gullah speech, not only to help them appreciate the language but to suggest something of the rhythm and flow of the narratives and tales, a quality which, as I have noted, cannot be captured on paper.

Features of Grammar

Many characteristic features of grammar and syntax set Gullah apart from other varieties of African-American speech.[15] Unlike standard English, which relies heavily on subordination to convey relationships between ideas, contemporary Gullah relies on coordination, or the combination of sentences that are short, abrupt, and loosely strung together. Gullah thus dispenses with many of the prepositions, conjunctions, adjectives, adverbs, and participles that tie together complex standard English sentences. In addition, the relationships between sentences are not necessarily specified through grammatical operations but may be left to be inferred from the usage or context.

The verb and pronoun systems are particularly distinctive in Gullah. Some distinguishing features of the verb structure include the uninflected verb, verb serialization, the introductory verb *say* [se], the complementizer *for* [fə], and verb reduplication.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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193 well as some others involving Gullah and other creole languages) has theoretical import for the study of etiology in pidgin and creole languages. The form may be English or may be African, but most probably it resulted from both, since the occurrence of a similar word with similar functions is characteristic of both parent language groups.

193
Verb Reduplication

•195 Reduplication is very common in Gullah. It is used to intensify; to indicate degree, magnitude, quality, or duration; and to express great excitement. Variation in repetition is often the key to the rhythm of Sea Island speech. Words or phrases are not repeated monotonously. Rather, each word or phrase starts with a low tone, rises to a mid tone with the first repetition, and reaches a very high pitch with the second repetition. The addition of repetitions usually modifies the meaning, as in the following:

Gullah:	English:
small small	very small
small small small	extremely small
clean clean	very clean
wrap up wrap up	wrap up very tightly
hungry hungry	very hungry

Some words may be preceded or followed by *too much*, to emphasize the meaning or alter it slightly: *small too much*, for example, means "very small" or "too small." Depending on intonation, *too much* can have a positive or negative connotation; for instance, *clean too much* signifies either "very clean" or "obsessed with cleanliness."

Reduplication forms are similarly widespread and are used to express a variety of meanings in African languages belonging to the Kwa group. Creole languages in general tend to follow the structure of the substrate language (in this case African), and it seems logical to conclude that the persistence of reduplication in Gullah is indeed an African carry-over.

193 English does utilize verbs as nominal modifiers such as *cry baby, go car* and *dance man*. However the creole does not have the treasury of synonyms that its parent languages possess. While *cry baby* is generally used in English to refer to one who cries easily or constantly, *cry man* is often the only reference that the creole language has for a complainer, one who whines and one who cries easily or constantly.

The unmarked verb has a high frequency of occurrence in Tables 2.2 and 2.3. But, its appearance alone or in conjunction with certain preverbs is restricted. Non-stative verb stems do occur with /dɐ/, /bɪn/, /bɪnɐ/ and /dɐŋ/. However, /bɪn/ seems to occur most often with stative verbs indicating simple past. The preverb /dɐ/ does not appear in this corpus with stative verbs to produce a construction such as */i dɐ nɔ/ *'he is knowing'; or */i dɐ ɓan/ *'he is wanting'. The seeming selectivity of the preverbal markers helps to account for the fewer tokens of /dɐ/ and /bɪn/ as compared with the higher count of unmarked verbs.

Table 2.4 shows stem verb useage for basilectal speakers exceeding that of pre-mesolectal ones by a factor of approximately two. An explanation for this pattern is that the pre-mesolectal speakers show a rise in the use of verbs ending in *-ing* and in the use of English 'be' verbs while at the same time they show a considerable decline in

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia
St. Simon's Island

●195 In the employment of a single derisive word the Negro is indeed a consummate artist. I know a cook with a disarming smile who accomplished what lectures never could. All she did was to point humorously to a puddle of clothes left on the floor by an untidy child and say: "Snake." Anyone who knows the snake's habit of shedding its skin in any place where it feels the urge will understand why that child's clothing was ever after left on a chair.

Another example of this knack of using the one right word was furnished me when I gave a "lift" to a Negro going my way. I asked where he wanted to get out. He replied casually: "Oh, jus' let me out at Lord Bing's." Although I use a fictitious surname, there is only one Negro on the island who could possibly qualify for the title.

142 144 There is, I believe, a biological reason for Lord Bing's feeling of importance. He is the living image of one of several bronze heads dug up in 1938 at Ife in Southern Nigeria, and believed to be portraits of rulers, kept as a record.[38] William Bascom, who was in Ife at the time of the discovery of these heads, says (in an article in the *Illustrated London News*[39] which should be reprinted in this country): "It is possible to identify the exact counterparts of these heads among the people of Ife today. Also, interestingly enough, striking resemblances between some of the heads and individual Negroes of the United States have been noticed. A large proportion of the ancestors of American Negroes are, indeed, known to have come from this region of West Africa." Members of Lord Bing's own family exclaim at the likeness (Illustrations 18 and 19), and it is clear that he is a "throw-back" mentally and physically. In addition, the Yoruba tribe, to whom the people of Ife belong, are said by N. G. Ballanta, in "Music of the African Races,"[40] to have the most highly artistic dance songs of all the tribes he investigated from the Senegal to the Cameroon. It is significant that this St. Simon's Negro is a good singer, and belongs to the family that has given me the most help in the preservation of the characteristic African rhythms.

(533)

538 191 Although the West Africans were not supposed to have a literature because of their lack of a written language—except in a few tribes—the tales brought to America by the slaves have entertained old and young, black and white, whenever and

[38] Others of the bronzes (thirteen in all) are assumed to be likenesses of deities.
[39] "The Legacy of an Unknown Nigerian Donatello," April 8, 1939.
[40] West Africa, June 14, 1930.

A, [For Illustrations 18 & 19, see Category 142, plate facing p. 113--Analyst]